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Venezuela in mourning after refinery blast

PUNTO FIJO, Venezuela (AFP) - Venezuela was in mourning Sunday after a massive explosion tore through the country's largest refinery, killing at least 39 people and injuring more than 80 others.

President Hugo Chavez declared three days of national mourning Saturday, saying the tragedy affected "the great Venezuelan family, civilian and military."

Among the dead were 18 members of the National Guard -- who were protecting the state-owned refining facility in the northwestern town of Amuay -- and 15 civilians, Vice President Elias Jaua said. The bodies of another six victims had yet to be identified.

Falcon state Governor Stella Lugo had earlier told official television that a 10-year-old child was among the victims.

Another 82 people were injured, Health Minister Eugenia Sader said.

Fifteen of the injured remain in hospital, according to Jaua.

Chavez expressed his sympathy to the families of the dead, urging calm because "fortunately, the greatest danger has been controlled."

Ordering a "thorough investigation," he vowed to help the people who have been displaced from their homes at the refinery complex, which also houses workers and their relatives, and in impoverished neighborhoods nearby.

Energy Minister Rafael Ramirez said the explosion was triggered by a gas leak at the refinery, which is owned by state oil firm Petroleos de Venezuela (PDVSA), the cause of which remained to be determined.

"The gas cloud exploded, igniting at least two storage tanks and other facilities at the refinery," he told VTV television.

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ARUBA IN STYLE Fashion Week founders welcome IMG Fashion NY Executives



IMG Executives Ashley Eden, Andrew Serrano and Lauren Hutchner



The motors behind the AIS Eva Wever, Ronchi de Cuba and Damalice Mansur

The second edition of ARUBA IN STYLE Fashion Week will soon be here, and founder Damalice Mansur, Ronchi de Cuba and Eva Wever were proud to welcome a P/R contingent from official Associate Producer, IMG Fashion NY, for a tour of some of the venues scheduled for this year's event.

Head of P/R for IMG, Andrew Serrano, was joined by Communications Manager Ashley Eden and Producer Lauren Hutchner for this preliminary foray, prior to the event described by Smarter Travel as "The Best Event in

the Caribbean."

A welcome cocktail party at the elegant Pure Beach lounge and restaurant in the Divi Phoenix Resort was an excellent example of the changes the founders are initiating for this year's AIS. "We are going to venture away from the formal, standard runway shows and conduct them in a way that better showcases Aruba," explained Ronchi de Cuba. "The settings and ambiance will be that of elegant parties, while the focus will always be on fashion." Pure Beach lounge and other chic pool and beachside locations from Divi Properties will be part of the program, as they join major sponsors Aruba Tourism Authority, Renaissance Resorts and Red Sail Sports.

"We are also considering this will provide terrific backgrounds for the designers' new lines," commented Damalice, "which will result great photos for them to use in their lookbooks. We had fantastic media response last year, but now their coverage will generate even more exposure for Aruba as a beautiful, desirable destination."

Continued on pg 5

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Uncertainty reigns over extended study fines

A cloud of uncertainty continues to hover over the issue of the extended study fine in Holland. It is still not clear if the measure will be introduced by the actual government, that is, to levy a fine on students who take longer than the allotted study period to complete their study program. The situation remains very tense, and is expected to persist until perhaps Tuesday.

On Friday the permanent commission of the Dutch Second House of Chamber met with the state secretary of education, Halbe Zijlstra, concerning the issue of the extended study fines.

This matter, obviously, has much relevance to Aruba because of the large number of Aruban students to whom this levy will apply.

Regrettably, they were unable to reach a satisfactory agreement in Friday's meeting, according to Samuel Dumfries, head of the department of education at the Aruba House.

Reportedly, a majority of the party members are not in favor of the measure, nevertheless the parties were unable to devise another measure for the financing of the deficit in the event this measurement is rejected.

The discussions will con-

tinue this week and we hope that the parties will have arrived at a decision. Although, it appears that the chance for a favorable decision on the issue is very unlikely.

Students who have extended their studies for one year will be levied 3.000 Euros on their tuition. This measure will affect at least 70.000 students, among these, several hundred Aruban students. It is very likely that both among student unions and educational institutions there will be dropouts on account of this measure.

Aruba is hoping that they will abandon this proposed measure, if not; it is intended to be enacted as of September first.

For this reason, the discussion must continue before said date.

Aruba will continue to monitor this situation and will keep our students up to date. Students are advised to visit the website of the Dienst Uitvoering Onderwijs (DUO) frequently. According to Dumfries, it will be on that website that students will find out if they will be levied the fine or not. The deciding meeting in the Second House of Chamber will probably be on Tuesday.

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Recent Standard & Poor's ratings for Aruba based on negotiations concerning reopening of Valero

Standard & Poor's recently issued a bulletin announcing their continued evaluation of Aruba in regards to three financial ratings. The sovereign credit rating has been upgraded from "A- negative /A-2" to "A- positive /A-2." However, the long term financial outlook of "stable" had been declared "negative," because of the Valero refinery standing idle since March, 2012. They also indicate that a reopening of the refinery operations may influence this rating positively, once that takes place. "In our view, a prolonged delay in reopening the operations of the refinery could weaken Aruba's external and fiscal profiles," states the report.

The transfer and convertibility assessment is unchanged at 'A-'.

At the time the suspension of the refinery operations was announced, S & P made the decision not to wait an entire year to do a re-evaluation, but to continue to monitor the situation as closely as possible. This was in an effort to determine what effect it would have on the Aruban economy.

The S&P report made reference to investments in public projects, much construction activity, economic activity and a significant growth in tourism activity as contributing to the island maintaining its standing. The S&P report states:..."A prompt reopening of the oil refinery would boost exports and GDP growth prospects as well as sustain fiscal revenues, giving greater scope for the government to reach its medium-term fiscal and debt

targets."

The report also noted "The suspension of operations at the refinery has persisted longer than we had expected, raising the risk of larger current account and budgetary deficits and higher external and government debt burdens in the coming two years. Rising receipts from tourism, plus the stimulus to economic activity provided by the government's public investment program, have largely contained the economic impact of the refinery's suspension so far this year."

Nations and oil companies worldwide are facing challenges with a number of refineries shutting down. Aruba Minister of Finance, Communication, Utilities and Energy, Mike de Meza, claims there was interest in purchasing the facility from a number of companies the moment it was placed on the market. After research and deliberations, Aruba and Valero agree PetroChina as the most viable option.

During a press conference on Friday afternoon, Minister de Meza and Prime Minister Mike Eman reminded the public that such an acquisition is a long process, and must run its course. They maintain hope of soon reopening of the refinery.

Regarding the continued stoppage of refinery operations, S&P stated "prolonged suspension of its activities raises the possibility that the central government could fail to meet its target of narrowing its fiscal deficit toward 3% of GDP in 2014, from an estimated 6.8% of GDP in 2012. Exports would also be

hurt. The economy is likely to contract mildly this year even if the refinery reopens in October, according to official calculations."

"The negative outlook reflects the possibility that we could lower our ratings on Aruba if delays in reopening the refinery result in higher-than-expected external and fiscal deficits and weaker GDP performance, as well as higher external and government debt burdens. A potential closure of the refinery would result in a larger economic contraction this year and sluggish growth in 2013, also leading to a downgrade. A prompt reopening of the oil refinery would boost exports and GDP growth prospects as well as sustain fiscal revenues, giving greater scope for the government to reach its medium-term fiscal and debt targets, including stabilizing gross central government debt at about 50% of GDP. (Standard & Poor's excludes central government debt held by public-sector pension and social welfare plans in calculating the debt level.) We would likely revise the outlook to stable under such a scenario, provided that the government is able to adhere to its medium-term fiscal trajectory."



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Haiti death toll from storm Isaac rises to seven

Storm lashes Florida, delaying Republican convention

TAMPA, Florida (AFP) - Tropical Storm Isaac lashed southern Florida Sunday and was expected to become a hurricane, forcing a one-day delay of the US Republican convention, after killing seven people in Haiti.

With winds reaching 50 miles (85 kilometers) per hour, the storm brought heavy rain and choppy seas to the Florida Keys after battering Haiti and sweeping across Cuba late Saturday, the US National Hurricane Center said.

A hurricane warning was in effect for the Florida Keys and parts of the state's southwest coast, and the Republican Party announced that severe weather warnings had postponed the start of its four-day gathering in Tampa.

The gathering is now set to nominally open today and then immediately adjourn to reconvene on Tuesday, when the weather is expected to clear up.

Early Sunday, the eye of the storm was around 80 miles southeast of Key West, Florida, and it was moving northwest at 18 miles per hour, with forecasts suggesting it would strengthen over the next 48 hours, the NHC said.

In its 2:00 pm (1800 GMT) advisory, the Miami-based NHC said "hurricane" conditions were possible in the Keys and southern Florida.

It predicted Isaac would become a hurricane as it moves back into the Gulf on a path that would have it make landfall Wednesday on the southern US coast.

Tens of thousands of Republicans will be in Tampa for speeches, parties and the formal nomination of former Massachusetts governor Mitt Romney as the candidate to take on President Barack Obama in the November 6 election.

Officials said they did not

fear a direct hit on the city but had acted out of concern that high winds, rain and possible coastal flooding could make travel dangerous, particularly for large buses packed with delegates.

Isaac was near hurricane strength early Saturday when the eye of the storm passed over Haiti, where hundreds of thousands of people are still living in squalid, makeshift camps following a catastrophic 2010 earthquake.

An eight-year-old Haitian girl died when a wall collapsed at her home and a 51-year-old woman died when her roof collapsed, according to officials, who later said five other people had also died in the storm.

More than 5,000 families had been evacuated to temporary shelters ahead of Isaac as aid groups provided clean water and hygiene kits to try to limit the risk of contaminated water and the spread of disease.

ARUBA IN STYLE Fashion Week founders welcome IMG Fashion NY Executives

Continued from pg 1



Damalice Mansur with Mom Nuhad and Eva Wever

The visiting IMG executives confirmed they were quite impressed by the welcome party and its venue, and have great confidence in the future of the fashion week, assessing it as a one-of-a-kind event for the Caribbean. "There are few islands we can think of that are as suited to a fashion week as Aruba. We are sure it will grow in interest and popularity, providing the kind of event that can be thoroughly enjoyed

by a fashion-conscious public. It isn't just a trade show, put a complete experience."

This year's AIS Fashion Week will take place Thursday, November 1 through Sunday, November 4. For updates on designers, venues and show schedules, check their website: <http://www.arubainstyle.com> or be a fan of their Facebook page for up to the minute news.

By Rosalie Klein

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EARLY BIRD SPECIAL

Arubans affirm: when it comes to Junior League baseball, WE are the champions!



Aruba is an island where baseball is a beloved pastime, and islanders are rightfully proud of their Little, Junior and Senior League teams, which have been leaving their mark on youth championships over the past few years.

In 2010, the Senior League team claimed the World Championship title, and they won the Latin American Championships again in 2011 to return to the World Series to defend it. In

2011, Aruba's Little League team was the Caribbean Champions. This year, it was the Junior League team of 12 to 15-year-olds who came home with the Latin American trophy to compete in the World Series in Taylor, Michigan the second week of August.

Imagine the excitement of an entire island to find their boys had defeated powerhouse teams such as the Asia/Pacific and finally, in the International Playoffs, the

Mexican team, which has been a contender in the Junior League World Series every other year for 19 years. This was only the second time Aruba had made it to the championships, the first being 2009. Aruba's team also won the international title that year and made it to the final game, losing to undefeated Arizona. Some of those great players went on to victory in the Senior World Champions in 2010.

Aruba's young team

played a stupendous game; it was exciting and close against the team from Florida, broadcast on ESPN. There was no clear winner until the very last out was called. A number of the calls by the umpire against Aruba were hotly contested by spectators, with slo-mo replay proving their fallibility, but their decisions stood. The series ended with Florida 12 and Aruba 10.

On Saturday, August 25, the team and their coaches Lyrick Pourier, Manuel Dos Santos and Glenda Thomasina received the hero's welcome they deserved. An hours-long motorcade across Aruba began at Joe Laveist Ballpark in San Nicolas with stops in several communities, where they were warmly welcomed.

They were personally greeted by Minister of Public Health and Sport, Dr. Richard Visser, upon arriving in Oranjestad, where they danced through the streets to the reception awaiting them at the newly established skateboard park on Caya

Bectico Croes. All the team was treated to healthy snacks from SETAR upon their arrival.

"We have no doubt these are the Latin American and World champions," Dr. Visser told the crowd, "We are very proud of our boys, who did a fantastic job." The team members and coaches were awarded gifts from several island sponsors, including RBC Bank, which financed their uniforms. Marketing Representative Joanne Maya awarded each team member gift certificates to Mario Sport Shop.

Shahaira Labad, Marketing Manager of SETAR, Aruba's telecommunications company and P/R Manager Susy Maduro were pleased to present all team members with vouchers for the newest and hottest smart phones available. "You have proven you really have the hearts of champions and play with love for the game," Shahaira told the team.

Continued on pg 5

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Famous Dutch soccer star Edgar Davids expected on Aruba!



In cooperation with the Association of Street Soccer in Holland, Straatvoebal Bond Nederland (SVBN), and Street Soccer Foundation Aruba (SSFA), a magna street football championship is being planned for Aruba. The big event, the Aruba Street Soccer Championship, is scheduled to take place on the 9th, 16th and 23rd of September.

The government of Aruba together with both organizations is intent on promoting healthy sports on our streets among the youth. This they believe will contribute to raising the quality of life in

Aruba's barrios. In addition, it will also help in our fight against obesity.

This great event will bring many renowned footballers from around the world to Aruba who will be promoting the grand Aruba Street Soccer Championship.

Different organizations are sponsoring the event who see the event as important in stimulating young people to do more sports and to return to healthy activities which in the past dominated life in the barrios.

The great Edgar Davids is expected to arrive here on Sunday, September 2nd. Dur-



ing the days leading up to the tournament, Davids will tour the different barrios playing street football with his own team against local teams as a promotion for the Championship games. The promotional tour will begin on the 3rd and run through to the 7th of September.

Adonsito Croes will narrate these games to entertain the public expected to come out to enjoy the games and to support our young talented people in the barrios.

On the 3rd, the promotional game will be played in front of Centro di Barrio Dakota, on the 4th on the Renaissance parking lot, on the 5th on the Aribus parking

lot, on the 6th on the CMB parking lot. And, on the 7th of September they will play the final promotional game on the parking lot of the Complejo Deportivo Fras Fagroa.

Street Soccer Foundation Aruba (SSFA) and Straatvoebal Bond Nederland (SVB) is inviting the entire Aruban community to come out and see the promotional games led by Edgar Davids and his fantastic team. Everyone is cordially invited to welcome Edgar Davids and his team on Sunday for their return to our island. Be sure to take advantage of this opportunity to meet this great footballer in person!

Arubans affirm...

Continued from pg 4
Remember these names: Albert Pop, Endry Brito, C-Jay Martha, Dwayne Angela, Junior Redondo, Ryan Oduber, Edmar Tromp, Emir Escobar, Anthony Lacie, Jeandrick Oduber, Sharif Arends, Gillian Wernet, Luis Gonzalez and Jirvin Penja; some are surely major league stars of tomorrow.

By Rosalie Klein



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International News

Libya's under-fire minister quits



TRIPOLI (AFP) - Interior Minister Fawzi Abdelali resigned on Sunday after coming under fire for the performance of security forces during a surge of violence that has rocked Libya, an official from his office told AFP.

Libyan security services have come in for censure following double car bombings that killed two people on the day Muslims celebrated the feast of Eid al-Fitr a week ago in Tripoli and attacks on several Muslim shrines in the past few days.

The criticism has been led by the newly elected General Na-

tional Congress, which on Sunday accused the interior ministry's High Security Committee of being lax or even implicated in the destruction of shrines, including those of the Sufi sect.

Islamist hardliners on Saturday bulldozed part of the mausoleum of Al-Shaab Al-Dahman, close to the centre of the Libyan capital.

The demolition came a day after hardliners blew up the mausoleum of Sheikh Abdessalem al-Asmar in Zliten, 160 kilometres (100 miles) east of the capital.

According to witnesses an-

other mausoleum, that of Sheikh Ahmed al-Zarruq, had been destroyed in the port of Misrata, 200 kilometres (125 miles) east of Tripoli.

Hardline Sunni Islamists are implacably opposed to the veneration of tombs of revered Muslim figures, saying that such devotion should be reserved for God alone.

The Sufi sect, which practises a mystical form of Islam and has played a historic role in the affairs of Libya, has increasingly found itself in conflict with Qatari- and Saudi-trained Salafist preachers who consider it heretical.

Prime Minister Abdelrahim al-Kib, meanwhile, defended the work of his government.

Kib also called on the congress to "quickly adopt laws criminalising the carrying of weapons and attacking historical and religious monuments."

Dozens of protesters responded to calls on Internet social networks and took to the streets of the capital on Sunday to denounce the destruction of the mausoleums.

Top Haqqani militant killed: Afghan spy agency

KABUL (AFP) - Afghanistan's spy agency said Sunday that the operational commander of the Al-Qaeda-linked Haqqani network responsible for spectacular attacks on Kabul had been killed in a US drone strike in Pakistan.

The death of Badruddin, the son of Haqqani network founder Jalaluddin Haqqani, has been rumoured for days but has been denied by the Taliban, to which the network is allied.

US drones killed at least 18 people last week when they struck several targets in Pakistan's restive North Waziristan tribal region near the Afghan border, Pakistani security officials said.

But confirmation of whether

Grizzly bear kills hiker in Alaska national park

dragged the remains to a more secluded, brushy cache site," said the statement.

The bear was shot and killed, according to the Alaska Dispatch, which cited Denali National Park Superintendent Paul Anderson as saying the victim had been too close to the bear.

The hiker apparently "came upon a bear at the edge of the river. Rather than try to move around the bear and keep a quarter-mile distance, he approached within 50 yards," Anderson said.

He added that the hiker's digital camera, recovered at the scene, indicated that he spent about eight minutes photographing the bear.

"It was grazing, not aggressive in any manner," he said, adding that there were no images of a charging bear, but the pictures showed the hiker got close to the bear.

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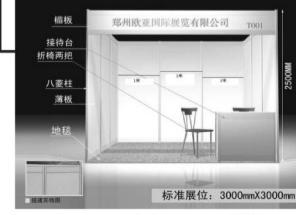
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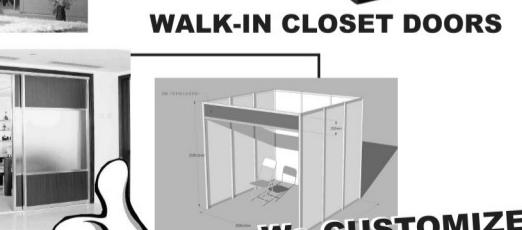


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International News

Venezuela in mourning after refinery blast kills 39

Continued from pg 1

PUNTO FIJO, Venezuela (AFP) - Ramirez, who is also president of PDVSA, said the refinery was shut down but operations would resume in two days.

The blast damaged 209 homes and 11 shops, while 13 families saw their homes completely destroyed and were temporarily moved to a naval base, according to preliminary figures.

Firefighters were able to bring the fire under control, though smoke was still billowing from the facility.

Jorge, a local police officer who lives just outside the refinery, said the scene after the blast was like an inferno.

"First, there was a shock as if the house was hit by a truck," said the officer, who declined to reveal his last name. "When the shock wave passed, then came the flames, which were all around."

While officials said there was no risk of another blast, Jaua noted that response units would "continue fighting the flames all night."

Before the blast, the Amuay refinery, one of the biggest in the world, was able to process about 645,000 barrels of crude oil a day.

Venezuelan media has often reported on complaints

about safety and maintenance standards at the country's refineries, which authorities have rarely confirmed.

The Latin American nation produces about three million barrels of oil per day, according to state figures, while the Organization of the Petroleum Exporting Countries puts the number at 2.3 million barrels per day.

OPEC certified in 2011 that Venezuela has the largest oil reserves in the world at 296.5 billion barrels, surpassing Saudi Arabia, the country with the biggest refining capacity.

In March, Venezuelan authorities reported even higher reserves, of 297,570 billion.

Venezuelans are gearing up for October 7 elections, in which Chavez -- Latin America's most influential and outspoken leftist leader for more than a decade -- is seeking a third term.

Opposition candidate Henrique Capriles, the youthful former governor of Miranda state, has trailed Chavez in recent polls by some 15 percentage points.

If Chavez, who has declared himself "free" of cancer a year after his diagnosis, wins and serves out his full term, he could rack up 20 years in office.



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Assad slams anti-Syria 'conspiracy' after massacre claims

DAMASCUS (AFP) - Syrian President Bashar al-Assad said on Sunday the foreign "conspiracy" against his country would be defeated, as his forces were accused of a bloody rampage in a town near Damascus that left hundreds dead.

"The Syrian people will not allow this conspiracy to achieve its objectives" and will defeat it "at any price," Assad said during a meeting in Damascus with a top official from Iran, Syria's chief regional ally.

The Syrian leader has since March last year been trying through force to smother a popular uprising that has turned into a brutal civil war which has left thousands dead, seen more than 200,000 refugees fleeing to neighbouring countries and 2.5 million in need inside Syria.

The Syrian Observatory for Human Rights said at

least 320 people were killed in a five-day onslaught on Daraya, a satellite town southwest of the capital, by troops battling to crush insurgents.

Grisly videos issued by opposition militants showed dozens of charred and bloodied bodies lined up in broad daylight in a graveyard, and others lying wall-to-wall in rooms in a mosque in Daraya.

The Local Coordination Committees, a network of activists on the ground, described it as a "massacre" by Assad's regime and said many victims had been summarily executed and their bodies burnt.

"The shabiha (pro-regime) militias... have been transformed into a killing machine that threatens the Syrian people and our future," it said.

Human rights groups have accused the regime of committing many atrocities in its

attempts to crush the uprising, and a UN panel said earlier this month it was guilty of crimes against humanity.

"Bodies were found in fields, basements and shelters and in the streets," Observatory director Rami Abdel Rahman told AFP.

He said 200 bodies had been identified so far, including 15 women and 14 children, and that many of the victims had died in shelling or were summarily executed.

In the first reaction by a world power, Britain said that if confirmed, the Daraya massacre "would be an atrocity on a new scale."

Activists issued graphic videos of the scenes in Daraya, one showing dozens of bodies in dimly lit rooms, with a commentary referring to "an odious massacre committed by the gangs of the Assad regime in the Abu Sleiman Addarani Mosque."

US party conventions target social media audience

TAMPA, Florida (AFP) - The US Republican and Democratic conventions have traditionally targeted television viewers above all -- but this year's will see an unprecedented effort to reach voters via social media.

In the last presidential election four years ago, Facebook, Twitter and other platforms were not yet the ubiquitous force they are now -- even if Barack Obama was among the first to use online tools in a major way for electoral ends.

It was arguably not until the US mid-term elections in 2010 that social media, including YouTube and Flickr, really took off as key tools in the politicians' communications armory.

The Republican National Convention, which opened in Tampa, Florida today, and the Democratic gathering in

Charlotte, North Carolina next month, confirm the trend, with huge teams of staffers dedicated to reaching voters online.

"Wherever you live, whatever device you use, we want you to engage as an active participant in this convention," the convention's chief executive William Harris said last week.

"This convention is about every American's future, and everyone has a stake in it so we created a 'Convention without Walls' to make this the most open and accessible event in history."

In addition to the inevitable Twitter and Facebook pages, both parties have set up stall on YouTube, photo sharing sites Flickr and Pinterest, and the Google + and Foursquare networks, as well as an array of smart-phone applications.



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Health & Living

Aleppo hospital staff brave shells to treat wounded



On the first floor of the Dar al-Shifa hospital in Aleppo, a boom sounds as a rocket fired from a helicopter hits a nearby building, and the staff begin preparing for another influx of patients.

They barely flinch at the sound of the attack, which hits a fifth-floor apartment some 150 metres (yards) from the facility. The hospital itself has been shelled four times, forcing the evacuation of all but two of its floors.

"My God, it's like this every day," a nurse sighs as she rushes towards the hospital's front door to meet a car carrying wounded children, even as the helicopter continues to circle overhead, firing cannon rounds.

Two children are rushed in, a boy and a girl, blood streaming from their heads. Dust cakes their faces, arms and clothes.

Eight-year-old Mahmud struggles to get his words out as he sits on a stretcher, doctors rubbing iodine on his head as his chest heaves beneath his Barcelona football club shirt.

"We were sitting on the floor of the kitchen, me and my sister Sana, and a rocket came and hit the house. We didn't see the ceiling collapsing on top of us," he says.

"My mum and dad are still there," Sana cries next to him, her bare feet hanging over the edge of the bed, blood mixed with bits of concrete in her reddish hair. "Where is my mum? Is she okay?" she weeps, as staff try to calm her down.

Both children have fairly minor injuries and are soon reunited with their parents. Their father rushes in first, followed by their grandfather, wild with panic, tears marking clean trails through the dust on his face.

Soon afterwards, their mother Fayha is pulled from the rubble and brought to the hospital. After the staff stitch up a wound to her head and wrap her in a blanket, she is brought for a family reunion.

In a small room nearby on the first floor, 25-year-old Mohammed, a general practitioner, is stitching up a wound on the arm of a fighter who was wounded by a grenade in the Saif al-Dawla neighbourhood, where fierce battles are raging between rebel forces and government troops.

"I've been here a month. I work four days at a time, full-time, treating everything that comes in," Mohammed says, asking an assistant to adjust a lamp so he can better see his stitching work. "It's hard, of course, but I look at it as a duty, a humanitarian requirement."

The facility is barely a hospital now, able to handle only the simplest tasks -- stitches, blood transfusions, X-rays. The staff try to stabilise those in need of anything more so they can be transferred across the border to Turkey.

Most of the upper floors are unusable, with many rooms trashed by incoming shells, and the risk of repeated attack has prompted staff to confine their work to the two lowest floors and the basement.

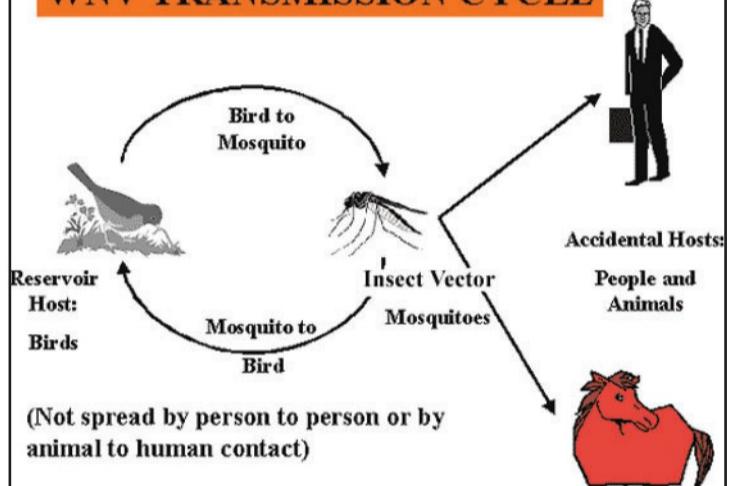
Abu Mohammed, the hospital pharmacist, maintains his cool. After a month working in the facility, he has learned to keep his emotions in check.

"Every day we are being shelled, and most of the people we see here are civilians, women and children. The sound of shelling, and the sound of screaming, have become something normal for us."

HEALTH TIP

West Nile virus

WNV TRANSMISSION CYCLE



West Nile virus is an infection transmitted by mosquitoes. If you become infected with West Nile virus, you may not experience any signs or symptoms or you may experience only minor ones. However, some people who become infected with West Nile virus develop a life-threatening illness that includes inflammation of the brain.

Mild signs and symptoms of a West Nile virus infection generally go away on their own. But severe signs and symptoms — such as a severe headache, disorientation or sudden weakness — require immediate attention.

Exposure to mosquitoes where West Nile virus exists increases your risk of getting West Nile virus. Protect yourself from mosquitoes by using mosquito repellent and wearing clothing that covers your skin to reduce your risk.

Common Symptoms:

- Fever
 - Headache
 - Body aches
 - Fatigue
 - Skin rash (occasionally)
 - Swollen lymph glands (occasionally)
 - Eye pain (occasionally)
- Serious infection signs and symptoms :**
- High fever
 - Severe headache

- Stiff neck
- Disorientation or confusion
- Stupor or coma
- Tremors or muscle jerking
- Lack of coordination
- Convulsions
- Pain
- Partial paralysis or sudden weakness

Signs and symptoms of West Nile fever usually last a few days, but sign and symptoms of encephalitis or meningitis can linger for weeks, and certain neurological effects, such as muscle weakness, may be permanent.

Mild symptoms of West Nile fever usually resolve on their own. If you experience signs or symptoms of serious infection, such as severe headaches, a stiff neck or an altered mental state, seek medical attention right away. A serious West Nile virus infection generally requires hospitalization.



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Sci-Tech**Refinery blast kills 39 in Venezuela**

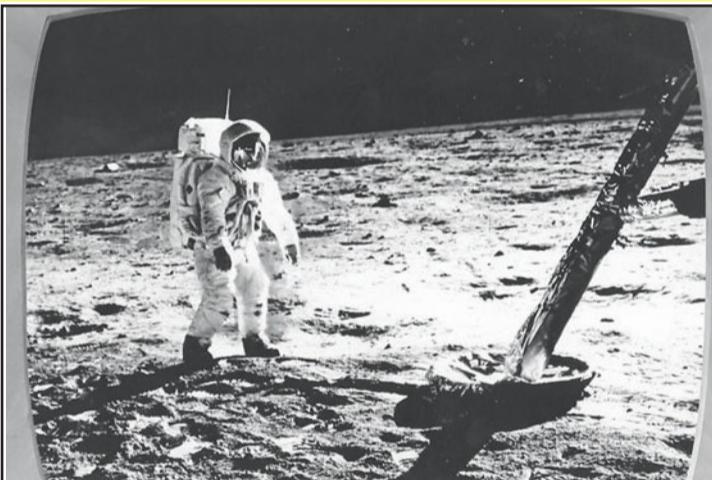
PARAGUANA- An explosion tore through Venezuela's biggest refinery on Saturday, killing at least 39 people, wounding dozens and halting operations at the facility in the worst accident to hit the OPEC nation's oil industry. Venezuelans who live next to the country's biggest oil refinery said they smelled a strong odour of sulfur hours before a gas leak ignited the explosion. The Amuay refinery was still burning on Sunday more than a day after the blast, sending up a thick column of black smoke. Amuay is among the world's largest refineries and is part of the Paraguana Refinery Complex. The cause of the disaster is under investigation. Oil Minister Rafael Ramirez said the country has enough fuel in storage, "10 days of inventories," to keep the Venezuelan market fully supplied with gasoline and diesel.

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Tributes pour in for 'man on the moon' Armstrong

Astronaut Neil Armstrong walks on the moon during the Apollo 11 moon mission in 1969.

WASHINGTON (AFP) - Tributes poured in Sunday following the death of Neil Armstrong, the humble US astronaut whose "small step" on the moon captivated the world and came to embody the wonder of space exploration.

Armstrong, who died Saturday at the age of 82 from complications following heart surgery earlier this month, inspired generations to reach for the stars and etched his name next to one of the great milestones of human discovery.

The grainy black-and-white broadcast of Armstrong's moon walk on July 20, 1969 was seen by some 500 million people, his words capturing the promise of the still-young space age and briefly uniting a planet split by the Cold War.

"That's one small step for

man, one giant leap for mankind," the earthbound heard Armstrong say, though he later claimed that an "a" before the word "man" had been lost in transmission.

US President Barack Obama, who was just two weeks short of his eighth birthday when the historic mission succeeded, said Armstrong had "delivered a moment of human achievement that will never be forgotten."

Praising Armstrong as a "reluctant American hero," his family expressed hope his legacy would encourage young people to "work hard to make their dreams come true, to be willing to explore and push the limits and to selflessly serve a cause greater than themselves."

The lunar pioneer was de-

corated by 17 countries and received a slew of US honors, but was never comfortable with his worldwide fame and shied away from the limelight.

In a rare television interview in 2005, Armstrong said he did not deserve the attention he received for being the first man on the moon, just steps ahead of fellow Apollo 11 astronaut Edwin "Buzz" Aldrin.

"I wasn't chosen to be first. I was just chosen to command that flight. Circumstance put me in that particular role," he said.

was a humble person, and that's the way he remained after his lunar flight, as well as before."

Aldrin said he had hoped that he, Armstrong and Michael Collins, the third astronaut on the mission, would have met up in 2019 for celebrations marking the 50th anniversary of Apollo 11.

On Sunday, more praise poured in from world leaders and fellow astronauts, with French Prime Minister Jean-Marc Ayrault saying that Armstrong's "small step" had "realized the dream of genera-

Born in Wapakoneta, Ohio on August 5, 1930, Armstrong had an early fascination with aircraft and worked at a nearby airport when he was a teenager. He received his pilot's license on his 16th birthday.

A US Navy aviator, he flew 78 missions in the Korean War.

Armstrong joined NASA's predecessor agency, the National Advisory Committee for Aeronautics, in 1955.

As a research pilot at NASA's Flight Research Center in Edwards, California, he flew on many pioneering high-speed aircraft, eventually flying over 200 different models, including helicopters, gliders, jets and rockets.

He reached astronaut status in 1962, and was assigned as command pilot for the Gemini 8 mission, during which he performed the first successful docking of two vehicles in space.

After retiring from NASA in 1971, Armstrong taught aerospace engineering at the University of Cincinnati for nearly a decade and served on the boards of several companies, including Lear Jet, United Airlines and Marathon Oil.

In announcing his death, Armstrong's family said they had a simple request to people in memory of Armstrong's life.



Armstrong even stopped signing memorabilia after learning his autographs were being sold at exorbitant prices.

John Glenn, the first American to orbit Earth, recalled Armstrong's legendary humility.

"He didn't feel that he should be out huckstering himself," the former Ohio senator told CNN Saturday. "He

tions of inventors, scientists, artists, poets or simply amateurs, of the beauties of space."

European Commission President Jose Manuel Barroso said he "vividly" remembered the night Armstrong and Aldrin landed on the "Sea of Tranquility," saying Armstrong had "left an eternal footprint on our memories."

COMICS



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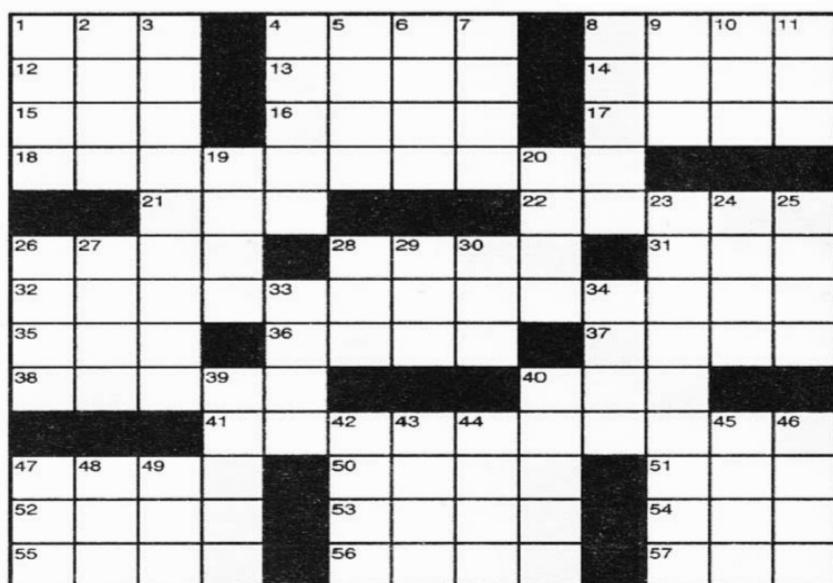
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ACROSS

1. Touch gently
4. Blacken the outside
8. Trench, for one
12. ___ de la Paix
13. "Take Me ___, Country Roads"
14. Hawaiian city
15. Museum treasure
16. Joyce's land
17. Political supporter
18. Saloon staffers
21. Mork's planet
22. Urge forward
26. Freeze start
28. Achievement
31. Actress Marie Saint
32. Without limits
35. Prohibition
36. Lack of tension
37. Small land mass
38. Eagle claw
40. Fr. holy woman
41. "Today I am a man" time
47. Jeff MacNelly comic strip
50. Roof's edge
51. High note for Guido
52. Delicate
53. Abel's father
54. Masterminded

DOWN

1. Boring, color-wise
2. Vague feeling
3. Engagement
4. Impudence
5. Trumpet, e.g.
6. Surrounded by
7. Russo of "The Thomas Crown Affair"
8. Deep cleft
9. Grease
10. Winner take
11. Betting considerations
19. Microscope glass
20. Finis
23. Stick with it
24. Daring Knievel
25. Stow cargo
26. Dill, in the Bible
27. Author Ephron
28. Govt. agency
29. Feminine suffix
30. Mary Todd's man
33. Singer Horne
34. Fritz of
35. North Pole export
39. The Stooges, e.g.
40. Moreno or Rudner
42. "Ain't Nothing Like the ___ Thing"
43. Compelled
44. Tsar with a "terrible" reputation
45. Actor Alda
46. Worker
47. Saint, in Brazil
48. Secreted
49. Fort ___, California



LOUNGE AROUND

COMICS

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			3	1	5			
4		5			8			1
	2	6				3	8	
5	4	8			9			
	2	8		7	1			
			3			8	9	2
	6	4				2	1	
2			9		5		3	
			2	1	7			

SOLUTION

3	5	9	4	2	1	7	6	8
2	8	1	9	7	6	5	4	3
7	6	4	5	8	3	2	1	9
9	1	7	3	4	5	8	9	2
9	3	2	8	6	7	1	5	4
5	4	8	2	1	9	4	3	7
1	2	6	9	3	8	7	5	6
4	7	5	1	5	2	4	7	6
8	9	3	1	5	2	4	7	6

Complete the grid so that every row and every column contains the numbers 1 through 9
A number is Never repeated in a row or column.
In addition every rectangle must contain the numbers 1 through 9



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Current as 08/26/2012	Currency Code	Buying rate banknotes	Buying Cheques	Selling Rate
U.S.A.	USD	1.77	1.78	1.80
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Britia	GBP	2.76	2.81	2.87
Switzerland	CHF	185.30	186.02	186.82
Netherlands	EUR	220.74	222.76	224.99
Sweden	SEK	26.04	26.76	27.56
Denmark	DKK	28.94	29.66	30.46
Norway	NOK	29.54	30.26	31.06
Japan	JPY	224.88	226.93	229.21
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Most French want referendum on new EU treaty: survey - Poll

PARIS (AFP) - A large majority of French want a referendum over a new EU treaty that would introduce a "golden rule" making balanced budgets mandatory, according to a poll to be published Monday.

President Francois Hollande has opted for a parliament vote to adopt the treaty, a key element in efforts to overcome the eurozone debt crisis, which will enter into force once 12 of the 17 eurozone members have ratified it.

Signed in March, the pact requires countries with high debt to keep their structural deficits below 0.5 percent of gross domestic product or face stiff penalties.

But 72 percent of the 998 people surveyed by polling institute CSA for the daily L'Humanite answered yes when asked whether they would like a national referendum on the treaty.

Apple to unveil mini iPad in October: report

WASHINGTON (AFP) - Apple will unveil a new, smaller version of its wildly popular iPad in October after the release of the latest version of its iPhone next month, the All Things Digital website reported Sunday.

"First comes the latest iteration of the tech giant's hugely popular smartphone, which will be unveiled at an as yet unannounced event on September 12," the website said.

"Only after the next-generation iPhone is out the door and on sale will Apple announce the smaller iPad it's been working on," it said.

"That device, which is ex-

Twenty-three percent said no, with five percent undecided.

Respondents from Hollande's Socialist Party were the least likely to favor a referendum, with 66 percent answering yes, while supporters of the Front de Gauche left party were the biggest backers at 80 percent.

Seventy-five percent of right-wing supporters answered yes to the referendum in the phone survey on August 21-22.

France's Constitutional Council ruled this month that no change to the country's constitution was necessary to adopt the EU fiscal pact, allowing Hollande to avoid a divisive battle within his Socialist party and with its left-wing allies over a constitutional amendment.

The amendment would have required three-fifths approval by parliament or a referendum.



pected to have a display of less than eight inches (20 centimeters), will be uncrated at a second special event, which sources say is currently scheduled for October."

The 10-inch iPad has long dominated the tablet market, but faces a growing challenge from smaller models like Amazon's Kindle Fire, the Google Nexus 7 and the Samsung Galaxy.

Apple is expected to launch the miniature iPad later this year, with analysts saying it could allow the California-based company to again best its global rivals despite the death last year of visionary founder Steve Jobs.



Finance

Merkel: 'every day' counts for Greece's austerity steps

BERLIN (AFP) - German Chancellor Angela Merkel on Sunday warned that "every day" counts in efforts by debt-wracked Greece to comply with its commitments and safeguard its eurozone membership.

"In this context, every day counts now to really strengthen efforts and apply what has been promised," Merkel told ARD public television when asked about how confident she was in Prime Minister Antonis Samaras.

Merkel said that much confidence had been lost over the past two and a half years and reiterated the need to now wait for a progress report, due next month, by Greece's international creditors.

"Like others I have said to the Greek prime minister that there is still a lot to do," she said.

As part of a 130-billion-euro (\$161-billion) bailout package from the EU and the International Monetary Fund (IMF), Greece has committed to sweeping reforms and some 11.5 billion euros of cuts in 2013 and 2014.

A positive report from the so-called Troika -- the European Commission, IMF and the European Central Bank -- is es-

sential for Greece to get the next 31.5-billion-euro installment of funds to keep it afloat.

After some members of her centre-right coalition have spoken publicly of a possible Greek exit from the eurozone or have appeared sceptical over a solution, Merkel said that Europe was in a "decisive" phase.

"We are at the moment in a very decisive phase in fighting the European debt crisis," she said.

And she cautioned that everyone should pay attention to what they say.

In Sunday's Bild am Sonntag newspaper, Alexander Dobrindt, the secretary general of the Christian Social Union (CSU), a junior coalition partner, said he saw Greece leaving the euro next year.

SATURDAY'S Crossword Answer



Chinese giant Sinopec sees net profit fall

Hong Kong (AFP) - Chinese oil giant Sinopec, Asia's largest refiner by capacity, announced on Sunday that first-half net profit fell 41 percent year-on-year, reports said.

Net profit for the six months ended June 30 was 24.5 billion yuan (3.85 billion US dollars), sharply down from 41.17 billion yuan a year earlier, Dow Jones Newswires and China's state Xinhua news agency reported.

First-half revenue rose 9.3 percent to 1.348 trillion yuan from 1.233 trillion yuan.

The Hong Kong-listed firm attributed the sharp decline in profits to a significant rise in crude oil prices and restricted prices of gasoline and diesel products, Xinhua said.

A drop in the prices of petrochemical products also reduced profits, Xinhua quoted the company as saying.

State-owned PetroChina, which is also listed in Hong Kong, said Thursday its net profit for the first half of this year fell 6.0 percent year-on-year due in part to a slowdown in China's economy.

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Two Pussy Riot members fled Russia to evade arrest: band

MOSCOW (AFP) - Two female Pussy Riot punk rockers who are being hunted by police for having taken part in a protest stunt against President Vladimir Putin have fled Russia in order to evade arrest, the group said Sunday.

"Our two members who are wanted by police have managed to leave the Russian territory! They are trying to recruit foreign feminists to prepare new action," the group wrote on its Twitter account, without giving details on where the women have fled to.

Five bandmates from Pussy Riot on February 21 pulled on brightly coloured balaclavas and belted out a "punk prayer" in Moscow's Christ the Saviour Cathedral calling on the Virgin Mary to remove Russian strongman Putin.

Three members of the group -- Maria Alyokhina, Nadezhda Tolokonnikova and Yekaterina Samutsevich -- were arrested then and on August 21 sentenced to two years in jail for "hooliganism motivated by religious hatred".

The other two bandmates

have remained free. But Russian police announced three days after the court ruling that they were seeking to arrest the duo.

Besides the five women, an unknown number of people have also participated in the action, notably in filming the scene in the cathedral.

The Russian court's ruling has been decried by the West which calls it disproportionate and excessive.

International stars including Paul McCartney, Madonna and Sting have also lent their support for the punk rockers.

Christian girl held on blasphemy cannot read: Vatican

VATICAN CITY (AFP) - French Cardinal Jean-Louis Tauran went to the defence of the young Pakistani girl accused of blasphemy, stressing that she "cannot read or write."

Interviewed on Radio Vatican, Tauran, who is in charge of interfaith dialogue in the Vatican, said "that before as-

serting a sacred text has been the object of scorn, it is worth checking the facts."

Rimsha, aged 11 to 16 according to different reports, is accused of burning pages from a children's religious instruction book inscribed with verses from the Koran, Islam's holy book. She was arrested and re-

manded in custody last Thursday.

But Tauran said that Rimsha "is a girl who cannot read or write and collects garbage to live on and picked up the fragments of the book which was in the middle of the rubbish."

"The more serious and tense the situation, the more necessary it is to have dialogue," added the cardinal, who was the late pope John Paul II's foreign minister.

The youngster reportedly has Down's Syndrome and her arrest has prompted outrage from rights groups and concern from Western governments.

Under Pakistan's strict blasphemy laws, insulting the prophet Mohammed is punishable by death and burning a sacred text by life imprisonment.

Rishma had been due to appear in court on Saturday but police and her lawyer said Friday that the hearing had been put back to August 31.

Rupert Murdoch @rupertmurdoch

Prince Harry. Give him a break. He may be on the public payroll one way or another, but the public loves him, even to enjoy Las Vegas.

[Reply](#) [Retweet](#) [Favorite](#)

479 RETWEETS 63 FAVORITES

LONDON (AFP) - Media mogul Rupert Murdoch came to the defence of Britain's Prince Harry on Sunday, urging critics to "give him a break" over photographs of him frolicking naked in a Las Vegas hotel suite. Australian-born Murdoch posted a message of support on his Twitter page after The Sun, his top-selling British tabloid, printed the images of 27-year-old Harry in defiance of orders from the royal family. The images of the third in line to the throne, cavorting nude with a mystery woman during a game of "strip billiards", first surfaced Wednesday on the US gossip website TMZ before going viral on the Internet. The Sun initially respected the royal family's request that British newspapers did not print the grainy camera-phone images, but broke ranks on Friday, claiming it did so in defence of press freedom. The newspaper said it was "ludicrous" that the British press were not allowed to print images that had already been seen by hundreds of millions of people on the Internet.

Katy Perry REJECT \$20 Mil 'Idol' Offer



Two seats were left vacant on the panel when Steven Tyler and Jennifer Lopez announced their back-to-back "Idol" departures in July. Reports also surfaced that Randy Jackson -- the only original "American Idol" judge still standing -- will be moving on to a mentor role on the show. "American Idol" wanted Katy Perry to fill one of its vacant judge's seats, offering her \$20 Million. Katy made it clear ... she was NOT interested and money wasn't the issue.

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Gold Coast Aruba: Great savings for large families on holiday rentals



Aruba's newest and most innovative gated community has enjoyed steady sales since breaking ground, as many are finding the secure surroundings and outstanding amenities are just what they were looking for before considering purchasing property on the island. Some owners are using the villas or town homes as vacation retreats rather than full time and are taking advantage of Gold Coast's rental services to turn their investment into ready income.

"The greater portion of home owners are using their "home away from home" in Aruba to escape the winter months, or spend holidays with the family on the island," noted Gold Coast developer Fito Croes. To assist in the demand for more complete facilities for groups and families, famed hotelier Ed Malone has been placed in charge of the rental program.

Staying at Gold Coast is a very attractive proposition for those traveling with groups that would require multiple hotel rooms. Two and three bedroom Villas or Town Homes accommodate large numbers and offer extensive amenities along with a final cost resulting in considerable savings. The community is minutes to the best beaches and all the casino action, and offers a quiet and secluded getaway with two swimming pools and specialized services with more on the way, such as a fitness room, tennis courts and mini-mall. Ed can arrange maid service, babysitters, caterers, airline pick-up and

drop-off; they even boast a shopping service to stock your shelves before arrival.

Gold Coast accommodations are elegant and spacious,



offering privacy for parents or a few couples. Beautifully appointed kitchens and bathrooms grace each abode; barbecues and lounges are provided for friendly cookouts and truly savoring the island life. All homes come with cable TV, high-speed fiber-optic Internet



connection, individual washer/dryer, and are fully air-conditioned. Cribs, high chairs and hair dryers are available for a modest fee. Concierge

services to arrange rental cars, spa appointments, activities and restaurant reservations are all part of the package.

Check-in for your holiday escape is conducted in the comfort of your vacation home, not while waiting online at check-in desk. In every way, Gold Coast seeks to pamper their guests while providing them with the feeling of being in a cozy community, not the normally bustling resort, particularly experienced during the major holidays. If you wish an optimal vacation experience with great savings, visit their website: www.goldcoastaruba.com to get acquainted with the community and the layout, details and availability of accommodations, or call 586-2200 to talk personally to a Gold Coast representative.

Healthy, tasty treats on the menu at Lecca Lecca

No foray to Oranjestad is complete without a stop to refresh and refuel at Lecca Lecca, the stylish "Gelato Shoppe" located right in the main bus terminal. This adorable eatery sports a menu that reflects the passion of its owner, Milly Lacle, for "healthy, natural foods, for a healthy body."

The idea of a sweet treat being good for you is contrary to everything we are being told today, but Milly did her homework before establishing her gelato and sorbetto factory on the second floor. Her recipes come from a respected gelato house in Italy, where they have been producing the refreshing, low or no fat product since the 1800's. She continues the tradition of using only fresh fruit juices and natural ex-



Fresh vegetable quiche

tracts to as flavoring.

There are absolutely no artificial colorants or preservatives in the gelato and sorbetto, which is produced fresh daily; leftovers at the end of the day are donated to children's homes Casa Cuna or Imeldahoff. They have over 60 flavors on their roster with 18 available at the shop each day, including at least one sugar-free and one-gluten free for those with special dietary needs. All the gelato is made from organic milk flown in from Italy, guaranteed free of steroids and antibiotics. Lecca Lecca pasteurizes the milk in their factory, to be sure there are no chemicals used in the



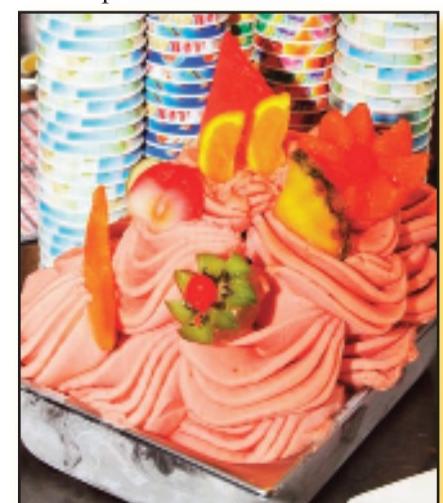
Favorites and unique flavors like grapefruit and lemon mint

process. The end product is whipped light and fluffy naturally, producing a satisfying treat drastically lower in fat, sugar and calories than traditional ice cream.

Unique flavors found nowhere else are a revelation. For a delightful surprise and pure refreshment, sample the grapefruit, passion fruit or carrot sorbetto; the rich, dark, sugar-free chocolate gelato is absolutely sinful, without the guilty conscience! They also have a unique collection of yogurt gelatos swirled with fresh fruit sorbetto in delightful combinations.

Lecca Lecca offers an attractive lunch menu including quiche made with only fresh vegetables, and sandwiches on crusty bread they prepare in their own bakery. Indulge in the soup of the day for a hearty sampling of authentic Aruban cooking.

Opened Monday through Saturday from 9:30 AM until 7:00 PM; it is a must do while in Oranjestad for a refreshing treat, with the emphasis on FRESH!



Tutti frutti a blend of fresh exotic fruits

SPORTS

Paralympics: Israel looks to burnish glittering record



HOLON (AFP) - With a glittering record of more than 300 Paralympic medals, 113 of them gold, Israel is hoping that the upcoming London Games will help erase the memory of a lacklustre performance in the Olympics.

Forty-year-old Reuven Magnagey is up every day at the crack of dawn to say his prayers and eat a light breakfast before heading off to the nearby Yarkon River to train.

At the London Games, Magnagey will compete in the mixed double sculls, in the newly-added rowing category

which was introduced for the first time at the 2008 Beijing Paralympics.

For Magnagey, his career as a Paralympic athlete began several years after he was shot during a deadly clash with Palestinian militants during the second intifada, or uprising (2000-2005).

"Ten years ago, I was an engineer in industrial management, comfortably installed in my own office and somewhat overweight, when the army called me for emergency reserve duty," he says, a wry smile on his face.

"At the time, there was a wave of suicide attacks hitting cafes, buses and hotels across Israel, and I found myself involved in a massive operation in Jenin refugee camp," he said.

The 10-day operation which saw pitched battles between troops and militants in the northern West Bank city, ended with the deaths of 53 Palestinians and 23 Israeli soldiers.

Although 13 of his colleagues died, Magnagey es-

caped with his life, although a bullet shattered his ankle.

After several complex operations and a long process of rehabilitation, he managed to pull through -- thanks to his growing involvement in sports and the help of experts and psychologists at Beit HaLochem, a national network of rehabilitation centres where the disabled can participate in sports.

With major centres in Tel Aviv, Jerusalem and Haifa, Beit HaLochem serves tens of thousands of disabled army veterans with a focus on sports as a tool for rehabilitation and social reintegration.

This year, Magnagey is one of 25 Israelis who will represent the Jewish state in London in nine categories including cycling, skiff, wheelchair tennis, table tennis, marathon, shooting, equestrian, sailing and swimming.

He is one of the many Israelis who with courage, endurance and determination are among the 4,200 athletes taking part in the Games from 166 countries.

came to the rescue.

Osasuna was the scene of a Barca defeat last season that helped to turn the title race against them and they went behind this time after a 17th-minute goal from Joseba Llorente.

After the visitors missed a hatful of opportunities, the game appeared to be going against them, until Messi rose to the occasion with strikes after 75 and 80 minutes.

Osasuna's Francisco Punal was red-carded by the referee for protesting about the Argentine's first strike, as he felt he was offside.

Victory provisionally took Barcelona top of the early-season standings, above Rayo Vallecano on goal difference.

Barca now turn their attention to the second leg of the Spanish Super Cup on Thursday, when they face Real Madrid at the Bernabeu with a 3-2 lead.

Madrid are unbeaten in the league in 2012 after a stunning march towards last season's league title, but they are searching for their first win of this campaign as they could only draw 1-1 at home to Valencia in their opening game.

Football: Messi double saves Barcelona



MADRID (AFP) - Lionel Messi struck a late brace to give Barcelona a 2-1 win over 10-man Osasuna on Sunday that took them to the top of the Spanish Liga table.

Barca appeared set for their first defeat under coach Tito Vilanova, who was sent from the dug-out for complaining to the referee midway through the second half, before Messi

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BARCELONA (AFP) - Belgium's Philippe Gilbert claimed the Tour of Spain's ninth stage here on Sunday, with local hope Joaquim Rodriguez retaining possession of the overall leader's red jersey. Gilbert prevailed in a dash for the line, with Rodriguez in second and Italian Paolo Tira-longo taking third at the end of a taxing 196.3km run from Andorra, the longest stage in this year's Vuelta. The inform Catalan-born Rodriguez was looking good for the stage win before being joined and eventually beaten by Gilbert. But he will have been pleased with his day's work as he extended his cushion in the overall standings over his main rivals for outright victory. He now leads Team Sky's Chris Froome by 53sec, with former winner Alberto Contador one minute adrift. The riders have a rest day on today before the action resumes with Tuesday's 190km 10th stage between Ponteareas and Sanxenxo.

Motorcycling: French teenager in coma after Brno crash

PARIS (AFP) - A teenage French motorcycle rider, Simon Danilo, has been placed in an artificial coma after crashing and suffering serious injuries in a rookies race at the Brno circuit this weekend, organisers said.

"According to the latest information he is in an artificial coma, but none of his vital organs are in danger," circuit director Ivana Ulmanova reported on Sunday.

Danilo, 15, crashed on the final lap of the Red Bull MotoGP Rookies Cup on Saturday, seriously damaging his spinal cord, according to motorcycling's official website, www.motogp.com.

He underwent surgery on Saturday night on two fractured vertebrae and a fractured leg.



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Red Sox deal Beckett, Gonzalez to Dodgers



Josh Beckett

LOS ANGELES, CA (AF) - The Los Angeles Dodgers acquired former World Series Most Valuable Player Josh Beckett and all-star infielder Adrian Gonzalez in a nine-player deal with the Boston Red Sox, the Dodgers said.

The Dodgers not only get three-time All-Star pitching ace Beckett and three-time Gold Glove first baseman Gonzalez but they also receive outfielder Carl Crawford, infielder Nick Punto and cash in the blockbuster deal.

"We continue to do everything in our power to strengthen our team for the stretch drive in an effort to reach the post-season," said Dodgers general manager Ned Colletti of the trade which is one of the largest in the history of Major League Baseball in terms of money.

"This trade today exemplifies ownership's commitment to making the team as good as

possible not only for 2012 but for many seasons to come."

The Red Sox will pick up first baseman James Loney and two prospects, pitcher Allen Webster and infielder Ivan De Jesus. They will also get two players to be named later.

The Dodgers are battling San Francisco for first place in their division while the Red Sox, who have one of the highest payrolls in Major League Baseball, are in fourth place in their division.

"We are absolutely committed to building the best team in 2013 and beyond, and we will do that in the most disciplined way possible," said Ben Cherington, general manager of the Red Sox. "We have a core of players here, still, that will be a part of our next great team."

The Dodgers are hoping the acquisition of Beckett will add

experience to their pitching staff.

The 32-year-old Beckett was named most valuable player of the 2003 World Series while he was with the Florida Marlins. He left the Marlins, who made him their second overall pick in 1999, to join Boston in 2006 and helped the Red Sox capture the World Series title a year later.

But Beckett has struggled this season and has just five wins and 11 losses in 21 starts. He has \$31.5 million left on his contract through the end of the 2014 season.

Gonzalez, who is set to earn \$133 million over the next six years of his contract, is having a banner year and leads Boston with 11 game-winning RBI. He has 15 home runs and 86 RBI and is batting .300 in 123 contests.

The 30-year-old leads all MLB players with a .398 batting average with runners in scoring position.

Former Dodger Loney was a first-round pick by Los Angeles 10 years ago. He is hitting .254 with four homers and 33 RBI in 114 games this season.

The 22-year-old right handed pitcher Webster is considered one of the top prospects in the Dodgers' system.



BRNO (AFP) - Spain's Honda rider Dani Pedrosa won the Czech MotoGP here on Sunday, beating world championship leader Jorge Lorenzo in a nerve-wracking final lap. Pedrosa, who finished the 22 laps on the 5.4-kilometre (3.4-mile) circuit in 42 minutes 51.570 seconds, has narrowed the gap on Lorenzo in the overall standings to only 13 points with six races to go this season. Britain's Cal Crutchlow on a Yamaha came in third for the first podium finish of his MotoGP career, ahead of Italian teammate Andrea Dovizioso. Last year's winner Casey Stoner was absent with a fractured ankle.

FIFA to look at bid continued from page 16

Swiss court documents, recently published by FIFA, reveal ISL paid millions of dollars in bribes to former FIFA president Joao Havelange and ex-FIFA executive committee member Ricardo Teixeira.

"If you look at things, it is clear there is something to investigate and that is what we are going to do," the 51-year-old Garcia told ARD.

Garcia also said the conduct of FIFA President Sepp Blatter will also come under scrutiny.

"The more important the person involved is, the more important it is to examine them as well," he added.



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(former American football player and coach of Armenian descent)

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FIFA to look at 2018, 2022 World Cup winning bids

BERLIN (AFP) - Michael Garcia, the newly-appointed joint chief investigator of FIFA's ethics committee, has said the awarding of the 2018 and 2022 World Cups to Russia and Qatar respectively will come under scrutiny.

Garcia of the USA and Hans-Joachim Eckert of Germany were appointed joint chairmen of the Ethics Committee during FIFA's extraordinary meeting in Zurich in July.

The awarding of the 2006 World Cup to Germany will also come under scrutiny as part of the pairs' inquiries, Garcia told German television in an interview.

The American said one of their many tasks is also to look into the relationship between FIFA and defunct marketing company ISL, who sold FIFA's World Cup TV rights.

continues on page 15

Arubans affirm: when it comes to Junior League Baseball, WE Are The Champions!!!



On Saturday August 25th, Arubas Junior League Team received a Heroes Welcome, with an hours-long parade beginning at The Joe Laveist Ballpark in San.Nicolas with stops at different parts of the island, where they were warmly welcomed.

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